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THE 1640 TEXT OF SHAKESPEARE'S SONNETS

In 1640, as is well known, John Benson of St. Dunstan's Churchyard issued a volume called *Poems: Written by Wil. Shake-speare, Gent.*, which contained—together with many other pieces—most of the Sonnets of Shakespeare as they had been collected in 1609, and is therefore sometimes carelessly spoken of as the second edition of the Sonnets. This volume has usually been discussed in connection with the question of the arrangement of the Sonnets, since the entirely different order from that of 1609 furnishes some evidence that by 1640 there was no tradition of a continuous sequence. But it has been very little considered with reference to the problem of its text, possible sources, and inferential significance. Almost the only exception to this statement is the account given by Sir Sidney Lee in his introduction to the Clarendon Press facsimile edition of the Sonnets (1905), where he speaks of the 1640 collection as follows:

Benson's text seems based on some amateur collection of pieces of manuscript poetry, which had been in private circulation. His preface implies that the sonnets and poems in his collection were not among those which he knew Shakespeare to have "avouched" (i.e., publicly acknowledged) in his lifetime.¹ . . . The theory that the publisher Benson sought his copy elsewhere than in Thorpe's treasury is supported by other considerations. Sonnets 138 and 144, which take the thirty-first and thirty-second places respectively in Benson's volume, ignore Thorpe's text, and follow that of Jaggard's *Passionate Pilgrim* (1599 or 1612).² The omission of eight sonnets tells the same tale. . . . It is difficult to account for [their exclusion] except on the assumption that Benson's compiler had not discovered them.³

Now if this is true it is of more importance than Lee points out. That in 1640 a practically complete collection of the Sonnets should be in existence in manuscript, different in order from that of 1609,

¹ Lee also observes that Warren's commendatory verses, at the beginning of the volume, imply that the reader will make the acquaintance of the poems for the first time.

² Though I have not had an opportunity to examine the 1612 edition of the *Pilgrim*, I have ascertained, by comparing Lee's account of it (Introduction to the reprint of 1905) with the Benson text, that the latter was printed from the second edition, that of 1612—as we should have guessed would be the case.

³ Pp. 57–58.

yet giving substantially the same text, would in itself be a circumstance of great interest, suggesting a number of curious questions. What could have been the original source of such a text? Is it possible that its text and its order are at least as authentic as those of the manuscript used by Thorpe in 1609? Does the absence of certain sonnets suggest the possibility that they were originally written at a different time, or addressed to different persons, from the rest? Such matters would have to be subjected to the most careful scrutiny. If, on the other hand, the sonnets in Benson's collection should appear to have been printed from the Quarto of 1609, as certain of the other poems appear to have been printed from *The Passionate Pilgrim* and other miscellanies, all these problems disappear.

It will first be necessary to outline the arrangement of the Poems of 1640, or at least that of the first part of the volume, which includes the Sonnets. The following numbers refer to the usual numbering, that of 1609, and the single numbers or groups which are separated by semicolons are those which Benson's editor grouped by themselves and provided with distinct titles. The Roman numerals in parentheses refer to the poems of the *Passionate Pilgrim* collection.¹ 67-69; 60, 63-66; 53-54; 57, 58; 59; 1-3; 13-15; 16, 17; 7; 4-6; 8-12; 138; 144; (III); 21; 23; 22; (IV); (V); 20; 27-29; (VI); (VII); 30-32; (VIII); (IX); 38-40; 41, 42; (XI); (XII); (XIII); 44, 45; (X); 33-35; 36, 37; (XIV); 24; 25; 26; 50, 51; 46, 47; 48; 49; (XV); (XVI); (XVII); (XVIII); 62; 55; 52; 61; 71, 72, 74; 70; 80, 81; 116; 82-85; 86, 87; (XX); 88-91; 92-95; 97-99; 100, 101; 104-6; 102, 103; 109, 110; 111, 112; 113-15; 117-19; 120; 121; 122; 123; 124; 125; 128; 129; 127; 130-32; 133, 134; 135, 136; 137, 139, 140; 141, 142; 143; 145; 146; 147; 148-50; 78-79; 73, 77; 107, 108; 151, 152;² 153, 154.

The first thing that strikes the reader in a survey of this arrangement is the extent to which the order of the Sonnets of 1609 is preserved, despite the alterations. Inside the separately titled groups it

¹ According to the correct numbering, amounting to twenty poems in all. Many editions, through a mistaken division of the 14th poem ("Good-night, good rest") into two, number poems 15-20 as 16-21.

² Here, before the final pair of sonnets on Cupid's brand, is inserted the "Tale of Cephalus and Procris."

is almost never changed, and in the latter half of the collection it is followed as a whole, with a few notable exceptions. That is, it represents such an arrangement as could never have been arrived at fortuitously, unconnected with either the Quarto of 1609 or the manuscript on which that Quarto was based. Or, to put the matter a little differently,—if an editor had all the sonnets before him, not numbered or arranged as in the Quarto, and proceeded to group them freely in twos, threes, and longer series, with a view to giving them new titles, it is inconceivable that he should arrange them in the sequences 67–68–69, 13–14–15, 8–9–10–11–12, 27–28–29, and the like—that is, in the same order (as far as it goes) as that of the Quarto. And the same thing is true if we think, not of a publisher's redactor, but of a private collector arranging the sonnets in a commonplace book. Benson's compiler, then, had before him either the 1609 Quarto or a copy of the manuscript from which it was printed. In view of the improbability of the contents of the Quarto being copied and preserved substantially entire, it is far more natural to assume that it was the printed volume which he had, unless typographical or other evidence is such that we must attribute the changes found in the text of 1640 to manuscript variation rather than to re-editing and reprinting of the printed page. We have next, then, to notice the exact character of the resemblances and differences between the two texts.

I may anticipate the nature of this evidence by saying that I believe no one could proceed far in the exact collation of the texts without becoming confident that the later was set up directly from the earlier. Despite many differences, the general effect is that of a fairly close following of the spelling, punctuation, and capitalization of 1609. In the whole collection of reprinted sonnets there are but twenty-five words differently capitalized in the two editions,¹

¹ These and other figures are no doubt to be viewed as subject to some correction, for they are based on a collation of the reprint of the 1640 collection made by A. R. Smith in 1885. This, the publisher stated, was "printed letter for letter, line for line, and page for page, as near the original as modern type will permit." I have tested the accuracy of the statement by an examination of the original (the copy in the Library of Trinity College, Cambridge) for all textual variants amounting to anything more than matters of spelling and punctuation, and in a number of cases for the latter also. A few errors in the reprint have been discovered, but there appears to be no possibility of the existence of any such number of them as to impair conclusions based on the figures here given.

—and readers familiar with the Sonnets Quarto will recall that the capitalization of its text is not characterized by extraordinary uniformity or reasonableness. With italicized words the case is still more striking; there are thirty-three of these, so printed—in several cases—for no reason which criticism has been able to discern, and in every case the 1640 text is identical with the earlier. In punctuation the changes, whether due to carelessness or to intended correction, are naturally more numerous; I have counted some 144 instances, found in 89 sonnets, all told. Roughly estimating that the whole text of the sonnets included in the volume contains something between 2,700 and 2,800 marks of punctuation, one may say that of twenty such marks nineteen are identical in the two texts; and some 55 sonnets show no variation in a jot or tittle.¹ Those acquainted with the habits of seventeenth-century penmen will best judge how far it is possible to conceive of this degree of accuracy having been maintained by copies into manuscript books of any kind. Finally, some 620 words are differently spelled in the two versions, out of a possible total of something like 18,000; but I place no stress on this proportion, since it is obvious that we cannot say with any accuracy in how large a number of the words there was any natural liability to error or change.

The typographical likeness of the two texts may be further illustrated by noting such facts as these: that in Sonnet 1 the Benson version is identical with that of the Quarto—every detail of spelling, punctuation, and capitalization considered—with the exception of the variant “Feedst” for “Feed’st”; that the same is true of Sonnet 8, with the exception of “receiv’st” for “receau’st”; that it is true of Sonnet 44, except for the change of “heauie” to “heavy”; of 48, except for “un-used” and “unused”; and so on. To the same effect is the evidence drawn from observing the repetition of certain oddities or errors in the Quarto text. Of course if these errors are such as to leave the lines in question with an appearance of correctness, their repetition may be due to any kind or amount of reproduction; but if they are distinctively typographical, and of a character to imply the carelessly mechanical copying of the 1609 text, they become

¹ All these computations refer to a total of 144 sonnets, eight of the 154 having been omitted in the 1640 collection, and two of them having been printed (as observed by Lee in the passage quoted above) from the *Passionate Pilgrim* version.

significant. Such, it would seem, are matters like these: the odd spelling "leav's" ("lustie leav's quite gon") in 5, 7; the spelling "were" (for "wear") in 15, 8; the mistaken placing of the apostrophe in "ti's" in 24, 3; the singular form of "monument" (despite the guiding rhyme "contents") in 55, 1; the transposition of letters in "emnity," 55, 9; the unintelligible misreading "Our" for "One" in 99, 9; the misprint "wish" (for "with") in 111, 1; the misreading of "lack" for "latch," again despite the rhyme, in 113, 6; the blunders "Made" for "Mad" and "proud and" for "prov'd a" (according to the accepted emendation) in 129, 9-11. These by no means exhaust the list. A somewhat different bit of evidence is afforded by Sonnet 101. As we shall see a little later, Benson's editor or printer undertook to change this sonnet so as to make it read as if referring to a woman, altering l. 11 ("To make him much out-live a gilded tombe") and l. 14 ("To make him seeme long hence as he showes now") to "make *her*" and "*she* showes." Through negligence, however, in l. 9 he omitted to change "he needs no praise," and so left this reminiscence of the Quarto text. Finally, for these typographical accidents, I may note the trifling but significant appearance of the capital *L* in "O Least the world," at the opening of Sonnet 72. In the Quarto the second letter of each first line is a capital, following the ornamental initial, and in the 1640 volume the same practice is followed when the sonnet stands by itself or begins a group, but not otherwise. In Sonnet 72, despite the fact that in the later version the sonnet is placed second in its group, the printer seems carelessly to have followed his copy.

Further details would be wearisome. Enough has been said to indicate that to suppose the 1640 text to be based on fugitive manuscript collections is quite impossible; and that, if we substitute for this the notion of an exceedingly accurate copy of the Quarto or its manuscript source, the typographical resemblances between the printed versions are still such as to make the view that Benson's printer can have followed the manuscript copy a violation of all the laws of chance.

What can we say, then, of the two specific proofs which Sir Sidney Lee adduces for his view that the Benson text was not based on that of 1609—namely, that eight of the sonnets in the latter were

omitted by Benson, and that he printed Sonnets 138 and 144, not from the Quarto, but from the *Passionate Pilgrim* collection? I may as well admit at once that no wholly satisfactory explanation of the first point has occurred to me, though I shall make some effort to consider it, a little later, in connection with the problem of how the 1640 arrangement of the Sonnets was made up. For the present I remark only (1) that the evidence for the printing of the second volume from the first is so unmistakable that the subsidiary question of the eight omitted sonnets cannot affect the main matter, and (2) that this puzzling question is not much less puzzling in case of the manuscript theory. No matter where Benson's text came from, the fact that it contains all the Sonnets of 1609 save eight, unless those are of a character to give some indication as to why they were omitted, is remarkable.

As to the other point, the text of Sonnets 138 and 144, it is very easily disposed of. These two sonnets were, in fact, the opening poems in the *Passionate Pilgrim* volume; and a glance at the outline of contents of Benson's volume, as given above, will show that, after setting up thirty of the sonnets from the Quarto, his printer turned to the *Pilgrim* and set up the first three poems it contained. He then turned back to the Quarto, set up three more sonnets, and returned to the *Pilgrim* for the next two; and so on, at irregular intervals.¹ He had no thought, then, of the poems which we call Sonnets 138 and 144 as being from the collection of Sonnets. Later, near the end of his task, when he came to them in his copy of the Quarto, he omitted them because they had already—in substance—been used. Or, as is perhaps likelier, the person who outlined the new arrangement and indicated titles for the sonnets crossed out the two in question as known to be among those chosen from the *Passionate Pilgrim*. Their appearance, therefore, in a different text from that of 1609 has no bearing at all on the question of Benson's copy for the rest of the sonnets.

¹ It will be noted that the *Passionate Pilgrim* order was followed throughout, except that No. X was omitted from its proper place and inserted after XIII, and that XIX was omitted altogether. The latter circumstance is readily explained by the fact that Benson's editor knew of a fuller version of the poem (Marlowe's "Live with me and be my love") in *England's Helicon*, which he later introduced into the collection. The former was probably due to the printer's turning over two leaves when he set up No. XI, and later going back for the omitted poem.

Thus far I have said nothing regarding those differences in the two texts of the Sonnets which amount to more than typographical details and which would therefore be of chief interest if we should regard the 1640 volume as deserving the name of a separate text. These must now be noticed, with a view to estimating their significance. Though it has become clear that Benson's printer used the text of 1609 for the actual setting up of the new volume, it is within the limits of possibility that there was another copy of the Sonnets, in manuscript, which guided him in forming a new arrangement and furnished him some new readings. We ought therefore to inquire whether there appear changes in the text which cannot well be attributed to the process of reprinting.

To this end I shall give a list of the variant readings of the 1640 text, classified—for convenience—according as they may be regarded as corrections of errors in the Quarto, or as new errors made by Benson (or his source). In some cases, of course, there may be a difference of opinion as to which group a given reading belongs in; but these are few. In these lists the Quarto (1609) readings stand first.

CORRECTIONS OF ERRORS IN THE QUARTO

6, 4	beautits	beauties	91, 9	bitter	better
13, 7	You selfe	Your selfe	98, 11	weare	were
47, 11	nor	not	127, 2	weare	were
50, 6	duly	dully	128, 14	their	thy
68, 7	scond	second	132, 2	torment	torments
69, 14	solye	soyle ¹	140, 5	weare	were
70, 1	are	art	147, 12	randon	randome
73, 4	rn'wd	ruin'd	153, 8	strang	strange
88, 1	dispode	dispos'd	153, 14	eye	eyes
90, 11	stall	shall			

NEW ERRORS OF 1640

3, 3	repaire	repaine	22, 2	are	art
3, 12	goulden	goulded	28, 5	ethers	others
3, 13	remembred	remember	37, 11	am	an
7, 9	car	care	41, 2	some-time	sometimes
13, 13	deare	dare	54, 9	is	in
20, 9	wert	went	54, 10	vnwoo'd	unmoov'd
21, 6	earth	eatth	55, 12	weare	were

¹ Malone's correction to "solve" is preferred by the greater number of modern editors.

59, 8	minde	mine	104, 14	beauties	beatties
65, 5	hunny	hungry	108, 5	sweet boy	sweet-love
70, 13	maskt	maske	108, 10	iniury	injuries
73, 5	twi-light	twi-lights	111, 2	harmfull	harmelesse
77, 6	thee	the	114, 10	kingly	kindly
83, 9	for	of	117, 9	errors	errour
84, 2	are	art	118, 5	nere	neare
84, 11	wit	writ	119, 13	rebukt	rebuke
84, 12	stile	still	129, 14	heaven	haven
88, 3	my	thy	131, 1	as	a
95, 10	chose	choose	133, 3	alone	along
101, 3	Both	But	134, 14	am I	I am
101, 11	him	her	139, 10	mine	my
101, 14	him	her	142, 1	thy	my
101, 14	he	she	146, 7	inheritors	in heritors
104, 1	friend	love	153, 11	withall	with all
104, 10	pace	place	154, 2	inflaming	in flaming

If we consider the nature of the corrections in the first list, most of them are seen to be such as any reasonably intelligent corrector would perceive the need of and make half-automatically.¹ Two are of some importance—"dully" for "duly" in Sonnet 50, and "ruin'd" for the at first sight puzzling "rn'wd" in 73; for these we should be truly grateful, especially in connection with the magnificent image which the second error threatened to spoil. But even these are such as a corrector might conjecture from the Quarto text itself; and there is not one in the list which implies another text as a necessary source for the correction.

The new errors of 1640 are more difficult to analyze. A considerable number—about twenty, I should say, or a little less than half—are obviously printer's errors, some of them of a wholly insignificant character. Perhaps an equal number suggest a process of unintelligent correction. In 7, 9, for instance, "care" is a possible reading, and was made plausible by the rhyme with the contemporary pronunciation of "are." So in 28, 5, "others" is one possible correction for the plain error of "ethers." In 95, 10, the compositor might well guess that "chose" was intended for the present tense. In

¹ I admit that it is odd that one who exerted himself to do this should have left, so negligently, some of the errors previously noted as reproduced from the Quarto text. But it is obvious that the correction of a typographical error is a matter of no evidential significance for the relation of the texts—it may be accomplished in any one of several ways—whereas the reprinting of such an error is at once a probable indication of source.

111, 2, the context, for a stupid or superficial reader, justifies the change of "harmfull" to "harmlesse," and the same is true of the "my" for "thy" in 142, 1. In 114, 10, the word "kingly" is used somewhat daringly as an adverb, and it was natural, again, for a hasty observer to change to the more commonplace "kindly."

Five of the changes belong in a class by themselves—those which alter the sex of the person addressed, in Sonnets 101, 104, and 108. These might well be attributed to another version, in manuscript, which had been in circulation apart from all contextual allusion to the man or boy addressed in a number of the sonnets; and the more so, perhaps, because the corresponding change is *not* made in the case of other sonnets containing nouns or pronouns of masculine gender. We have already seen some evidence, however, indicating that the changes are due to the editor or corrector,—the unchanged pronoun, for example, in 101, 9. It will be seen by a reference to our table of contents that Benson's editor not only followed Thorpe in putting in the opening pages of the volume the sonnets addressed to a man friend who is urged to marry, but (unlike Thorpe) brought into the opening pages most of the other sonnets plainly having reference to one of the male sex.¹ In the Quarto of 1609, between Sonnets 68 and 101 there is none which cannot be read as referring (or addressed) to a woman, and that Benson's editor so understood the greater number of them his titles abundantly indicate. When, reaching Sonnets 101, 104, and 108, he came upon such disconcerting words as "he" and "boy," he did not scruple to alter them rather than impair the unity of that portion of the collection.

Finally, it is to be admitted that among the new errors of 1640 there are one or two which of themselves would suggest a misreading of manuscript as their cause. The chief instance is "unmoov'd"

¹ These include 54, 57, 63, 67, 68. Sonnets 19 and 126, which are of the same class, were among those omitted from the 1640 volume. There remain Nos. 20 (the "master-mistress" sonnet), 26 (beginning "Lord of my love"), and 41 and 42 (referring to the stealing of the poet's mistress), which we might think would also have been introduced before the 16th page of Benson's text, where the first woman-sonnet was introduced from the *Passionate Pilgrim*. Sonnets 20 and 41 and 42 might have been mistaken, by a hasty reader, for woman-sonnets, but one can hardly suppose this in the case of 26, which occurs on Benson's 38th page. Perhaps, then, the editor did not think of the conventional love-poems as beginning until some point beyond this page. The first sonnet groups entitled as if having reference to women are 80-81, 116, and 82-85 (called "Love-sicke," "The Picture of true love," and "In prayse of his Love"), which occur on the fifty-first and following pages of the text.

for "vnwoo'd" in 54, 10; another is "hungry" for "hunny" in 65, 8. With adequate evidence for the existence of a manuscript as a subsidiary source for this text of the sonnets, we should assume that it furnished the explanation of these readings. As it is we can only say that of themselves they cannot be viewed as sufficient evidence, and that it is possible to explain them, as we have done the others, as due to misreading or blundering correction of the Quarto. Both "unwoo'd" and "honey," like some other altered words that we have noted, are rather unusual or daring adjectives in the places where they stand, and it may be conjectured that a prosaic corrector preferred the familiar terms most closely resembling them. "Unmoov'd," indeed, does not make absolute nonsense of the line, as "hungry" must be admitted to do.¹

On the whole, then, there is little or nothing in the way of new readings in Benson's text to call for the assumption of another source than the Quarto. Most of the alterations are naturally explained, and all can be explained, as due to natural conditions of correcting or reprinting.

There remains the inquiry whether it is possible to account for the arrangement of the sonnets in the 1640 volume, and for the omission of eight of those which were included in the source-text. After a great deal of thinking—and, I might add, reckless imagining—on this subject, I still find myself unable to form any complete picture of the process which was followed in the making of the Benson collection. But some things are fairly obvious, and some others may be conjectured, which I shall set down rather for the gratification of innocent curiosity than because of any important bearing on the question of the text.

In the first place, our 1640 volume is, in a peculiarly definite sense, one of those tasks described by Dr. Johnson as undertaken by those who "lay two books before them out of which they compile a third." This applies literally, if we confine ourselves to the first half of the Poems, which is made from the Sonnets and the *Passionate Pilgrim*; whereas we must recognize more than two books if we include the second half, wherein Benson made use of Heywood's

¹ This error, of course, and perhaps the "unmoov'd" also, may be explained by the familiar process of an error of the ear.

Epistles, of *England's Helicon*, and various other sources.¹ It would seem to have been the publisher's object to represent this as a new publication (see the remarks of Sir Sidney Lee, quoted at the beginning of this paper), and we may assume that he instructed his compiler to intermingle the materials drawn from different sources, and to rearrange them at the same time in such a way as both to enhance the attractiveness of the book and to conceal its unoriginal character.² Perhaps the first task of the redactor (if I may so dignify him, in the manner of higher critics of Homer or the Pentateuch), on taking up the Sonnets of 1609 as his first principal source, was to furnish titles for the pieces it contained. This would seem to have been done, at any rate, before their rearrangement was undertaken; for if they had been freely shuffled and then furnished with group headings, they could not well have kept the original order, inside the groups, which we have seen is a general characteristic of the 1640 text. We may suppose, then, that in a copy of the Quarto the redactor noted the title "Loves crueltie" for Sonnets 1-3, "Magazine of beautie" for Sonnets 4-6, "Quicke prevention" for Sonnet 7 alone, and "An invitation to Marriage" for Sonnets 8-12, and so on, with continuous titling, until Sonnet 63 was reached. Here the continuous grouping is broken, and, as I conjecture, for some such reason as this: the redactor had given Sonnet 60 the title "Injurious Time," 61 the title "Patens armatus," and 62 "Sat fuisse." (He was quite right in this, for the three sonnets have no apparent connection.) When he came to 63 he observed that for it and its immediate successors the title "Injurious Time" would again be very appropriate, and therefore indicated, in a note, that these sonnets were to be grouped with 60 under the caption already given it.³ Then he proceeded to entitle 67-69 and 70, and thereafter made another break in continuity, for some reason not so easy to guess. That is, he omitted Sonnet 73 from the natural group 71-74, entitled "A Vale-diction," and marked it to go with 77 instead (with which it has much

¹ For some account of these, see Lee's Introduction to the Sonnets in the Clarendon Press facsimile of 1905.

² For the devious ways of these pirating stationers, see Lee's account of Jaggard in his Introduction to the reprint of *The Passionate Pilgrim*, and, for Benson in particular, Professor W. D. Briggs's account of the makeup of the Jonson Quarto of 1640, in *Anglia*, XXXVIII, 115-17.

³ Making the group consist of 60, 63-66; he might better have stopped with 65.

less to do), under the title "Sunset." I can see no adequate cause for this,¹ and am consoled only by the fact that this is the only case in the whole collection where, within the separate groups of sonnets, the arrangement of the Quarto was changed unreasonably. There is no further break of this kind until we reach Sonnets 128 and 129, which were properly omitted from the sequence 127, 130-32 (called "In prayse of her beautie though black"), and separately entitled "Upon her playing the virginalls" and "Immoderate Lust." The final instance is the omission of 138 from the sequence 137, 139 and 140, called "His heart wounded by her eye," for the double reason that it interrupted the sequence and had already been reprinted from *The Passionate Pilgrim*.

The groups of sonnets now having been formed and named, instructions were probably given for printing without reference to the existing order of the groups; on the contrary, the Quarto arrangement was to be distorted, as we have guessed, for the very reason that the new collection was to look different from the old. "Print a few groups from the Sonnets Quarto, then two or three selections from the *Pilgrim*; then return to the Sonnets for more, and so proceed." Something of this sort we may suppose to have been the printer's instructions. But we cannot suppress a desire to know why he should have plunged into the middle of the Quarto and begun with the inconspicuous group 67-69. To be sure, its title, "The glory of beautie," is a promising one for the opening of the anthology. Is any other reason discoverable? Only, so far as I see, what has already appeared. These readers of 1640 understood the great part of the Sonnets to have to do with a woman or women; on the other hand, some of them were clearly concerned with a man; let these be got out of the way at the beginning.² Perhaps it was to avoid ambiguity in this regard that there was set at the very beginning a sonnet whose first line determines the sex of the person addressed: "Ah, wherefore with infection should *he* live?"

¹ Perhaps it is not the "redactor" who is to be held responsible, but merely the printer, who may have skipped 73 by mistake, and done the best he could with it later.

² Just the opposite process, it will be observed, from that which seems to have been followed by Thorpe or his editor, in 1609, when all the sonnets obviously not addressed to a male friend were gathered at the end of the collection. I do not know why Benson's order should include Sonnets 57-59 in the opening pages; in at least one sonnet of all the other groups there is no room for doubt as to the sex. (Could "sovereign," in 57, have suggested a man? Perhaps so, by 1640.)

But what, in this process, became of Sonnets 18 and 19? We may infer that they had been entitled as a pair, like 13-15 and 16-17; and though they do not, like their predecessors, have to do with the theme of marriage or procreation, they belong with them as clearly addressed to a man. The absence of any internal reason for their omission suggests that, to further the new arrangement, a couple of copies of the Quarto had been clipped, and the sonnets intended for the several groups pinned or pasted together. In that case 18 and 19 may have been lost. Another pair, 75 and 76, seems to have disappeared in like manner, together with four single sonnets, 43, 56, 96, and 126. The last-named, however, may have been omitted intentionally, as it is the twelve-line poem (often, though wholly without warrant, called the "envoy") which the printer of the Quarto had marked as incomplete by inserting parentheses where he supposed the last two lines were missing; Benson's compiler may therefore have crossed it off, possibly hoping to find a fuller version as he did for the incomplete Marlowe poem in *The Passionate Pilgrim*.¹ If, indeed, he was really disposed to be critical in such matters, we may also see a reason for the omission of 96; for this is the sonnet whose final couplet is repeated from that of 36, and may therefore again have seemed to be an imperfect copy. This conjecture, that Sonnets 96 and 126 were excluded intentionally rather than by accident, seems to be confirmed by the fact that the sonnets numbered from 88 to 150 show no such general disarrangement as those in the earlier part of the Quarto text. In other words, after the last insertion had been made from *The Passionate Pilgrim*, following Sonnets 86 and 87, the compiler seems to have wearied of the process of rearrangement, and to have resolved to proceed by the straightest road toward the end. Indeed we need not suppose that the latter portion of the Quarto was cut up for rearranging at all.²

Another hypothesis³ deserves consideration, as a means of avoiding the notion that any portion of the Quarto copy was clipped for reprinting; namely, that the omitted sonnets had been marked by

¹ See p. 22, note 1, above.

² The irregularities in this portion are (1) the transposition of 102-3 with 104-6, (2) the deferring of 107 and 108 to a place near the end of the series, and (3) the omission of 116 as having been introduced earlier, between 81 and 82.

³ I am indebted for it to Professor W. D. Briggs.

a note indicating that they were to be grouped with others later in the volume (as we have seen appears to have been done with 60, 127, and a few others), and that the printer, through lack of a corresponding note reminding him of the point from which he should go back for the deferred poems, failed to do so and lost them altogether. In itself this is not unnatural, but one or two considerations seem to make against it. One is the loss of Sonnets 18 and 19, which ought to have come into the opening section, close to their original context. Another is the fact that the appearance, near the end of Benson's text, of Sonnets 78 and 79, 73, 77, and 107 and 108 suggests that the printer *did* go back at that point, and pick up whatever had been omitted.

The precise character, then, of the methods followed in the making of the Benson text from that of 1609 remains undisclosed. I am not without hope that some reader of this paper may be more fortunate than I in explaining just what happened to cause the loss of the sonnets which did not reappear in 1640. But this is a question which we have seen to be one of curiosity rather than of serious import, at least so far as the matter of the text is concerned. It has proved possible to determine that the text of 1640 has no independent value, and to see somewhat more than has hitherto been observed of the process by which it was made.

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